

Some Early Mexico News

Facts About the City And County Taken From the Early Files of the Mexico Weekly Ledger.

Men may come and men may go, but newspapers seem destined to go on forever. So a perusal of copies of the Mexico Weekly Ledger of 1855 and 1856 would have one believe for even in those pioneer days the weekly paper that was carried "post haste" by stage and on horse-back was a thing that people looked forward to.

In those days when the telegraph was in its infancy and the speedy wire service of today was lacking papers were more largely local and portrayed little of world news, except that which was brought by travelers or had been copied from other sheets. The editor and the reporters too put a great deal of editorial matter in their news articles, often expressing opinions more freely than they told the news.

The newspaper formed, too a sort of "weekly novel" for it had one of the front page, that stood out, even about the most conspicuous want ad and was sure to rivet the attention of the ladies by such gentle titles as "The Noble Revenge" and "The Dying Year."

The Weekly Ledger, one of the pioneer papers of Central Missouri had as its policy in 1855 the high theme of "Devotion to Literature, Science, Agriculture, Education, Amusements, the Markets Etc." all of which indicated that the editor of 1855 must have indeed been a versatile man. He also professed strict neutrality in politics, but announced that his terms were \$1 in advance.

As a top header on the front page of the issue of September 15, 1855 John Q. Pool announced that his "stock of dry goods was alright" and that "it is useless to attempt to enumerate the wide assortment now on hand." T. W. Reed, in competition, announced, with a larger ad that the prices on razors, assorted perfumery and Portmonies Etc., were "Going Down" as he was disposing of his stock at "prime cost."

T. M. Northcutt had an ad "Of Interest to Gold Hunters," but he was not trying to interest the kind of hunters that had crossed the plains, for he was giving bargains in iron bedsteads. C. W. Ricketts, Attorney and Counsellor at law displayed a bold ad on the front page, a thing that all good barristers shun now a days, and announced that his specialty was the "guaranteed prompt collection of debts."

On that date too it is recorded that one William P. Hart of Christian College proposed to establish a high school in Mexico called "Prairie College" and that in addition to the regular course instruction would be given in Greek and Latin Language. "Terms for five months from \$8 to \$12."

"The Mansion House" in Louisiana, Mo., then the scene of many a recital of the events of the plains, and where travelers from east and west met, announced a new management, that of Mitchell & Gladney.

Land near Mexico was just being opened and little of it was in cultivation. One record of real estate transfers states that "Henry Williams sold 160 acres of unimproved land east of Mexico to T. M. Northcutt & Co. for \$5 per acre."

Another states that T. S. Eller, agent for E. Garrett of Baltimore, Md., sold to John G. Field of Columbia 280 acres of unimproved farm land seven miles south east of Mexico for \$10 per acre."

A Howard County man had a novel idea of amusing competition in a coming fair. He announced that

AUDRAIN COUNTY CIVIL WAR STORIES

(Continued From Page 4.)

Jackson, son of Judge James Jackson of pioneer days of the county.

After the battle of Moore's Mill, Porter's command divided up into small detachments, some going to their homes, some to their rendezvous but the main body was going to the northern part of the state.

After the battle of Moore's Mill, Porter's command again divided into small detachments, some surrendering under Lieutenant Tood at Mexico and some going south with Captain R. K. Phillips, among whom were Joe Inlow and Sam Murray, both of Audrain county.

Great excitement was created in Mexico and its vicinity when it was known that the notorious Bill Anderson was in an adjoining county and headed toward Audrain, shortly before the Centralia Massacre. A little after the middle of September, 1864, Anderson made an attack on the post at Fayette and was driven off. He then went through Randolph county to Paris and finding the federal forces there too strong for him, turned to the southward, coming in the direction of Mexico, until he reached a point where the Mexico and Paris road crosses Long Branch. Instead of continuing on his way toward Mexico, he turned southwestward and crossed the western part of Audrain county to Centralia. He was followed from Paris by Major Johnson with about one hundred and seventy-five men and the next day the fight at Centralia occurred. Shortly before this Captain George W. Bryson, a regular Confederate soldier of the

John R. White of Howard County proposes giving a \$50 silver pitcher, at the state fair to the person who will exhibit a better one year mule colt than the one he will exhibit."

The same issue speaks of the death of a soldier of the Revolutionary War, stating that "Thomas Dunbar, an old soldier of the Revolution died at the residence of his son in Madison County, Ky. He was born in Loudon Va., in 1782 and had lived to be 103 years of age."

The St. Louis stock market reveals the fact that butchers were paying 5% for beef and that the market was brisk.

Hogs from the wagons and rail roads were selling at 4 1/2 c to 5 c.

"At Cadiz, Ky., a free negro was hung recently in accordance with the sentence of the vigilance committee. Another negro who knew of a plot that had been formed was ordered to be whipped and was given seven hundred and fifty lashes, when he died."

In 1858 the policy of the Ledger had changed so that the sheet was headed with the caption "The Welfare of the people is the first great law" and the editor was conducting a column of Biggedy-Piggledies, notable among which was this: "What is better than presence of mind in a railroad accident. Answer. Absence of the body." Another read: "There's a divinity that shapes our ends the pig remarked as he looked at the kink in his tail."

As to the high cost of livin' in these golden days "It is said that in Salt Lake City whiskey of the best grade retails for 25 cents per drink at the bar and from \$12 to \$20 per gallon."

As far as painless dentistry was concerned, it must have been practiced then as today for one F. A. Brewer, "practical as well as mechanical dentist" of Fulton stated that he could "remove or replace any troublesome tooth without pain or torture."

According to the Ledger in 1858 wheat was 80c a bu, corn 50c, sides of bacon 8 1/2 c per lb and whiskey 30c a gallon. The world do move.

Missouri troops, who had been in the siege of Vicksburg, was transferred to the Trans-Mississippi Department then commanded by General Kirby E. Smith, made his appearance in this section on a recruiting expedition. In April, 1864, General Smith made a detail of ten men, of his best and most daring scouts to go to north Missouri to recruit men for the service. Pursued by Federals from the south side, these men got across the river just below Jefferson City. After traveling about twenty miles northward in Callaway county, they separated, each going to his former home. Bryson went to the home of John Barnes south of Centralia and there recruited four men. Near Centralia Bryson ran across a company of Federals guarding a wagon load of ammunition and guns, being taken from Centralia to Columbia. Bryson, with his men, opened fire on the Federals, and though Major Evans in charge of the troop, had a full company, they ran, abandoning their charge. Bryson captured 75 guns and 10,000 rounds of ammunition and soon raised a company of sixty-two men. He soon afterward captured a train of Federal horses at Centralia. He then started on a scout to capture Mexico. While north of Mexico about ten miles one morning he divided his men into small bunches in order to breakfast at different houses. One of these houses was that of Peyton Botts. The lieutenant who had ordered breakfast at the Botts' home failed to leave a guard there to look out for Federals. While Mrs. Botts was preparing a breakfast a Federal troop came along and seeing that unusual preparations were being made for breakfast compelled Mrs. Botts by threats of killing her husband to tell that the breakfast was for a band of rebels. The Federals concealed themselves and when Bryson with ten men returned to the house to eat breakfast, they were fired upon at close range by the Federals, killing one horse and wounding Bryson. Bryson fell back into the woods and rallied his men, but when he got back to the Botts' house, they were all gone, carrying with them as a prisoner the man whose horse they had killed.

This fight occurred the day before the Bill Anderson fight at Centralia, and for that reason in the minds of some, Bryson has been connected with Anderson in the guerilla warfare of North Missouri. Bryson was never connected with Bill Anderson though Britton in his "The Civil War on the Border," puts Bryson down as a guerilla, and classes him with Anderson, Todd and others. He was a regular Confederate soldier and at the time of these occurrences was recruiting. Captain Bryson was taken care of by Logan Mundy and John Ellis of that neighborhood, until he recovered from his wounds. He was kept in the timber near their houses. Bryson was attended by Dr. W. R. Rhodes, then of Santa Fe, now residing in Mexico. While Bryson was still unable to service, the first lieutenant of the company, under Bryson's instructions, joined General Price near Booneville. By the time Bryson was able to travel, seventy-five men had come to him and he started to the southern army and after a long and tiresome march, rejoined Kirby Smith, with whom he remained until the surrender. Captain Bryson returned to Missouri after the war and married the daughter of Logan Mundy, with whom he became acquainted while being nursed for his wounds. He now lives in Gainesville, Texas, and is treasurer of Cooke county.

Dream Lore.

To dream you are at the equator signifies an abundance of the necessities of life. To farm: it is a good omen, as it promises good weather and fine crops. To merchants it foretells a decrease in business. To cross the equator in a ship, riches if the ship is North bound; poverty if South bound. To see a line where the equator is denotes good business qualifications, success in commercial life.

On the Job.

A western paper says: The measles broke out here last week, but Dave Johnson, the town constable, caught 'em.—Boston Transcript.

COURT HOUSE DIRECTORY

Collector—C. P. Arnold, deputy Miss Lola Powell.
County Clerk—S. P. Cunningham, deputy, Miss Mable Grafford.
Circuit Clerk—E. F. Elliott, deputy, Miss Lela Tinsley.
Probate Judge—E. A. Shannon, deputy, Miss Bess Woods.
Assessor—S. T. Torreyson, deputy, Mrs. S. T. Torreyson.
Prosecuting Attorney—F. E. Hollingsworth, deputy, Miss Minerva Sanford.
Sheriff—C. L. Blum, deputy, J. E. Blum.
Circuit Judge—E. S. Gantt, court Reporter, Mr. Funk.
Recorder—Mrs. Stephens, deputy, Miss Ellen Stephens.
Treasurer—J. C. Ringo.
Surveyor—R. S. McKinney.

CITY HALL DIRECTORY

Mayor—J. W. Gallaher.
Clerk—Wallace Dearing.
Collector—J. D. McKee.
Assessor—John Marshall.
Chief of Police—Sam Wallace.
Fire Chief—Ed Pratt.

MEXICO MINISTERS

Christian Church—The Rev. F. W. Emerson.
Baptist Church—The Rev. J. H. Hughes. John E. Turner, Associate Pastor.
Holiness Church of God—William G. Robinson.
Methodist Church—The Rev. W. C. Cowart.
Presbyterian Church—The Rev. A. A. Wallace.
Church of the Nazarene—The Rev. T. Scott Hopkins.
St. Brendans Catholic Church—Father P. D. Gaven.
St. Paul's Episcopal Church—The Rev. Geo. Wharton.

SUNDAY SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS

Christian—John Barclay.
Methodist—Lester Miller.
Baptist—Ross Wagner.
Holiness Church of God—Ralph Hutcherson.
Presbyterian—George Will Robertson, Jr.
Christian Science—B. G. Null.

AMERICAN LEGION OFFICERS

Bryan Wilson, Post Commander.
George D. Talley, First Vice-Com-

mander.
Harper Van Ness, Second Vice-Commander.
Rhodes Jesse, Adjutant.
Rev. W. C. Cowart, Chaplain.

F. C. Coleman, Service Officer.
Humphrey Craddock, Sergeant-at-Arms.
G. Alex Hope, Historian.

Severe Old Forest Laws.
Forest laws in England were instituted by William the Conqueror, and were so severe that they presided death for a man killing a deer.

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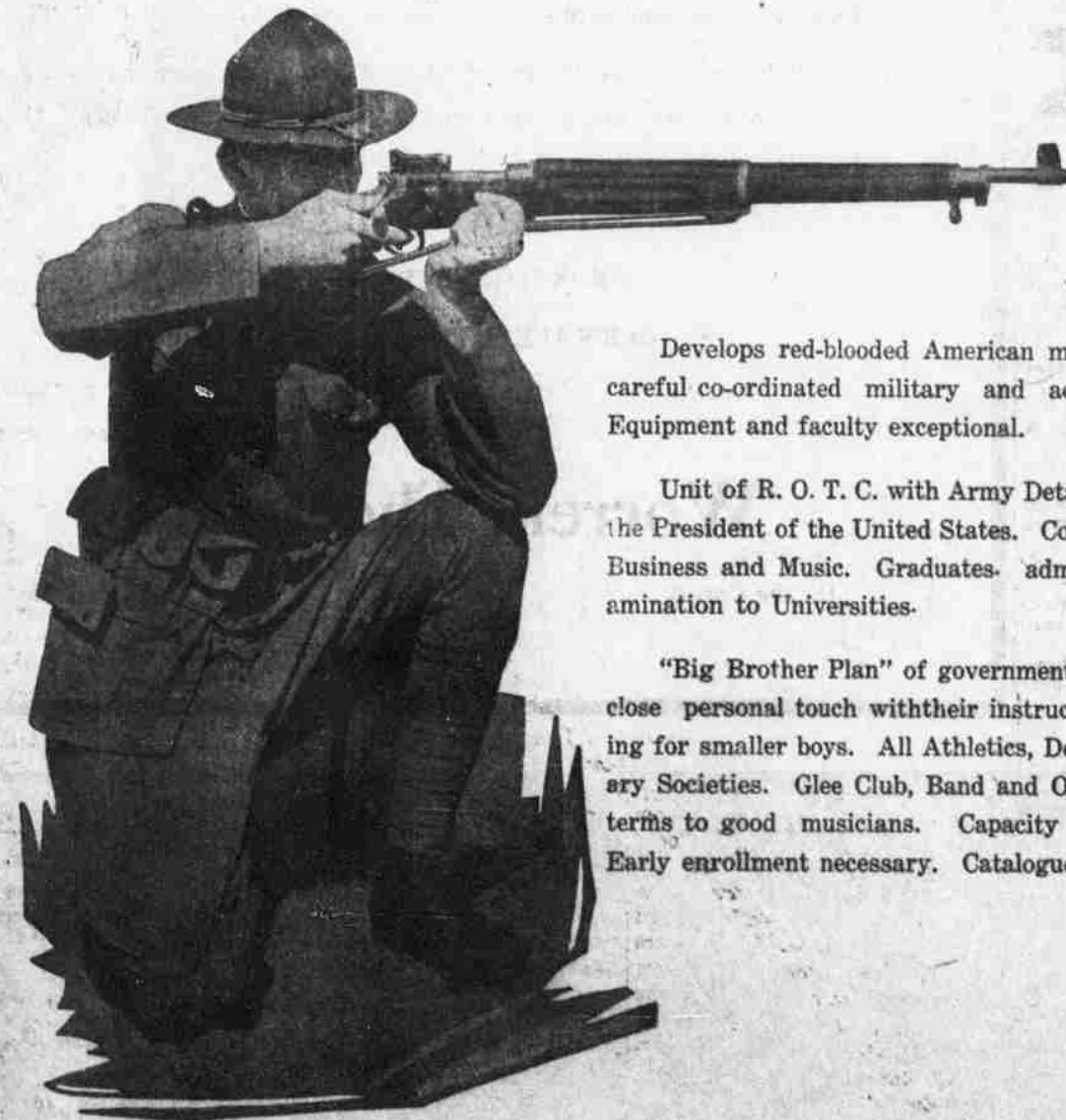
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